



## FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES

# Summer Squash

Michigan-grown summer squash are available  
July through September.

### RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Cocozelle, Crookneck, Pattypan, Straightneck, White Scallop, Zucchini.

Zucchini, the most popular summer squash, is dark green on the outside with pale flesh.

Yellow crookneck and straight neck squash has yellow skin and flesh. The skin might be smooth or bumpy.

Pattypan squash is greenish-white or yellow. The inside is white and juicy.

### YIELD

One pound	2 medium summer squash. 3 ½ cups raw slices. 3 cups raw, grated squash. 1 ½ cups cooked squash.
1 to 1 ¼ pounds	one pint frozen summer squash.

### FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Purchase squash that are firm and do not have bruises, nicks or soft spots. Bag separate from meat, poultry and seafood products.

Keep summer squash away from raw meat so that meat juices do not contaminate it

Keep in the refrigerator, away from raw meat so that meat juices do not contaminate it.

Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.

Wash squash using cool running water. Do not use soap or detergent.

Use a separate cutting board for vegetables, and keep away from raw meat, poultry and seafood

Follow standardized procedures recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture for home canning.

### HOW TO STORE

Handle squash gently because the skin is thin and fragile.

Store summer squash in the refrigerator.

### QUICK AND EASY SERVING TIPS

Wash squash and trim ends. Summer squash does not have to be peeled or seeded unless it is large and has thick skin or has large seeds. Large summer squash can be used if they are peeled and the seeds are removed. They can then be grated and used in quick bread recipes.

Add thin strips or slices of summer squash to salads or soups.

Serve raw slices or strips with a low-fat dip.

Use grated summer squash in spaghetti sauce or quick bread.

## RECIPE

### Skillet Zucchini with Chopped Tomatoes

1 teaspoon margarine  
2 small onions, peeled and chopped  
4 small (about 6 inches long) zucchini, washed and thinly sliced  
2 medium tomatoes washed and chopped  
Dash of pepper

In a large nonstick skillet, melt margarine over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring until softened. Add zucchini and cook for 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for another 3 to 5 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for another 3 to 5 minutes or until zucchini is tender-crisp. Season with salt and pepper. Makes 4 servings (3/4 cup).

This is an official 5 A Day recipe.  
Nutritional analysis per serving: 60 Calories; 1 gram (g.) fat; 0 milligram (mg) cholesterol; 5 g fiber; 25 mg. sodium.

## HOW TO PREPARE

### Boil

Wash and slice squash. Bring water to a boil in a saucepan. Water should be enough to just cover the squash. Add the squash and bring back to a boil. Cook uncovered for 2 to 4 minutes or until tender.

### Steam

Wash and slice the squash. Bring about 1 inch of water to a boil in a saucepan. Put squash slices into a steamer basket. Put the steamer basket into the saucepan, cover and steam 4 to 6 minutes or until tender.

### Microwave

Wash and cut 2 medium-sized squash into even-sized slices. Place squash in a microwave-safe baking dish. Add 3 tablespoons of water to the dish. Cover and cook on high power for 4 to 7 minutes or until tender, stirring halfway through cooking.

Baby squash can be microwaved whole by piercing them with a fork and cooking on high power until tender.

### Stir-Fry

Wash and cut the squash into thin slices or strips. Heat 1 teaspoon oil per cup of squash pieces in a wok or frying pan. Add squash pieces to hot oil. Season with salt and pepper. Use soy sauce or fish sauce to taste instead of salt. Stir and turn pieces for 4 to 5 minutes so they cook quickly and do not become soggy.

## HOW TO PRESERVE

### FREEZING SUMMER SQUASH SLICES

Wash and cut summer squash into 1 1/2-inch slices. Bring about an inch of water (or enough to cover squash) to a boil. Add the squash and cook, uncovered for 3 minutes. Remove from boiling water and cool.

Put cooled squash into freezer bags, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Seal, label, date and freeze. Use frozen summer squash within 8 to 12 months for best quality.

Do not freeze more than one quart (2 to 3 pounds) of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. One cubic foot will hold 30 quarts of food.

### FREEZING GRATED ZUCCHINI

Wash and grate zucchini

Bring 1 to 2 inches of water to a boil in a saucepan.

Put a thin layer of grated zucchini in a steamer basket and place the basket over the boiling water. Cover the saucepan and keep heat high.

Steam for 1 to 2 minutes until the flesh looks translucent.

Put grated zucchini into freezer containers, leaving 1 1/2-inch head space. Cool by placing the filled freezer bags in cold water. Seal, label, date and freeze. Use thawed grated zucchini in recipes. If watery when thawed, discard the liquid before using the zucchini.

Do not freeze more than 1 quart (2 to 3 pounds) of food per cubic foot of freezer capacity per day. A cubic foot will hold 30 quarts of food.

**Canning is not recommended for preserving summer squash unlike with winter squash.**

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Food Domain Website

<http://fooddomain.msu.edu/>

National Center for Home Preservation

<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html>

“So Easy to Preserve” 5th ed. 2006. Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia, Athens.

<http://www.uga.edu/setp/>

Safe Handling of Raw Produce and Fresh-Squeezed Fruit and Vegetable Juices

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodsafe.html>

*This bulletin replaces E-2662 Using, Storage and Preserving Series-Summer Squash (Michigan State University Extension, 1990)*

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